GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1397
ANSWERED ON:29.10.2008
IMPORT OF GENDER TESTING KITS
Patil Shri Balasaheb Vikhe

Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a large number of people from Punjab, Haryana and Chandigarh are importing gender testing kits under fake names;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether these are the States where male-female ratio is already far below the National average; and

(d) if so, the steps taken or being taken by the Government to check import of such gender testing kits?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE FOR HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE(SMT. PANABAKA LAKSHMI)

(a) & (b) A report appearing in "Hindustan Times" dated 23/11/07, inter alia indicated that Gender Testing/Sex Selection Kits from the United States of America and Canada were flooding the markets in Punjab. The report indicated that these kits were freely available fro Rs. 15,000 to 20,000. It was further stated that the medical professionals, who were earlier using the Ultrasound Machines, were now buying these kits online and selling them to the expecting mothers to help them determine the sex of the foetus and, possibly to commit foeticide, if the foetus was found to be a female.

(c) Yes sir, vide the table below:

Child Sex Ratio-Bottom 7 States/UTs

India and State/Union Territory/District	Child Sex Ratio 1991 Census	2001 Census
India	945	927
Himachal Pradesh	951	896
Punjab	875	798
Chandigarh#	899	845
Haryana	879	819
Delhi#	915	868

Rajasthan 916 909

Gujarat 928 883

Source: Census 1991 & 2001 O/O Register General of India

#Union Territory

(d) The Central Board of Excise & Customs (CBEC)/Department of Revenue were requested to consider intercepting the Gender Testing Kits Imported into the country under Sub-Section (2) (k), (u) &(v) of section 11 under chapter IV of the customs Act, 1962 and to furnish details of the importers of such kits for the purpose proceeding against them under the Pre-Conception & Pre-natal Diagnostic Techniques (Prohibition of Sex Selection) Act, 1994 (PC & PNDT) Act 1994), vide the letters dated 29/11/07 and 5/1/08.

2) CBEC, vide their letter dated 1/4/08, informed this Ministry (Health & F.W) that as per the reports received from their major Port Customs, no import of goods described as sex determination(gender testing) kits had been noticed during the last three years. The Customs authorities further informed that they had difficulty in distinguishing and intercepting the 'Gender Testing Kits' if the kits arrived in a package bearing a different nomenclature or description, like that of the Pre-Conception Ovulation Predicting Kit, which were permitted under the foreign Trade policy for import. They, therefore, requested for providing them clear identification parameters so as to facilitate them to distinguish and identity the 'Gender Testing Kits' from amongst other similar equipment permitted to be imported and intercept the offending kits when imported into the Country.

3) In the light of CBEC's letter dated 1/4/08 cited above, two rounds of Inter-Ministerial Meetings were held on 7/5/08 and 16/5/08, where the representatives of the Customs Department, Director General of Foreign Trade (DGFT), Director General of Health Services (DGHS) and the Drugs Controller General of India [DCG (I)] were invited to find a solution of the problem posed by the importer of Gender Testing/Sex-Determination Kits.